

Message Text

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12

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAM-01 ARA-06 /077 W

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O R 060740Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6381

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 1087

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CG, AO, PINS

SUBJ: MERCENARIES REFUSED TRANSIT RIGHTS THROUGH ZAIRE

PASS USIA FOR IOP/M AND IAA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. ZAIRIAN PRESS FEB 4 CONCENTRATED ON GOZ DECISION TO PROHIBIT
TRANSIT OF MERCENARIES THROUGH ZAIRE TO FIGHT IN ANGOLA. SAVIMBI
AND HOLDEN WERE INFORMED OF DECISION DURING THEIR MEETINGS WITH
MOBUTU FEB 3. ACCORDING TO SOURCES CLOSE TO PRESIDENCY,
PRESS SAID, EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACTION WAS IN CONFORMITY
WITH POLICY OF NEUTRALITY OF ZAIRE IN ANGOLAN AFFAIR; ZAIRE
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CANNOT DENOUNCE SOVIET-CUBAN MERCENARY PRESENCE AND

AT SAME TIME PERMIT THOSE OF OTHER NATIONALITIES TO TRANSIT ZAIRIAN TERRITORY. PRESS FURTHER NOTED THAT MOBUTU TOOK ACTION UPON HIS RETURN TO KINSHASA AFTER REPEATED REPORTS OF SOME EIGHTY SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE COMING THROUGH COUNTRY.

2. AT PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER HIS MEETING WITH MOBUTU, SAVIMBI OBSERVED THAT MERCENARIES COMING FROM ANGOLA WOULD BE ALLOWED PASS THROUGH ZAIRE ON THEIR WAY HOME.

3. IN THEIR EDITORIALS, SALONGO AND AZAP EMPHASIZED GOZ NEUTRALITY IN ANGOLAN WAR AND NEED NOT GIVE SOVIET-CUBAN COALITION ADDITIONAL EXCUSES FOR CONTINUING ITS INTERVENTION. AZAP IN PARTICULAR NOTED THAT MOBUTU'S CREDIBILITY WAS AT STAKE BOTH AT HOME AND ABROAD. SALONGO ON OTHER HAND RECALLED HIS CONDEMNATION OF FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND HOPED THAT GOZ'S POSITION IS RESULT OF ITS OWN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE WITH MERCENARIES. THIS EXPERIENCE, IT CONTINUED SHOULD NOT BE REPEATED IN ANGOLA.
END UNCLASSIFIED.

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5. COMMENT: THERE IS MUCH SPECULATION AMONG OBSERVERS HERE TO THE EFFECT THAT MOBUTU'S DECISION ON THE MERCENARIES MUST BE AN OVERTURE TO NETO, OR AT LEAST A CONCILIATORY REPLY TO NETO'S AAPSO SPEECH IN LUANDA. OTHERS THINK MOBUTU HAD TO RESPOND TO AMIN'S RECENT CRITICISM OF FNLA/UNITA MERCENARIES OR RISK SEEING THE UGANDAN LEADER ALLY WITH THE MPLA. WHILE EITHER OR BOTH OF THESE FACTORS MIGHT HAVE ENTERED INTO MOBUTU'S DECISION. WE BELIEVE MOBUTU MAY HAVE DECIDED TO GO ON PUBLIC RECORD AS OPPOSING MERCENARY ACTIVITY IN ZAIRE PRIMARILY TO COUNTER WIDESPREAD PUBLICITY, MUCH OF IT NEGATIVE, CONCERNING BRITISH AND OTHER EUROPEAN MERCENARIES STAGING OUT OF ZAIRE TO HELP THE FNLA IN NORTHERN ANGOLA.

6. SUCH A PUBLIC POSITION STRENGTHENS ZAIRE'S CASE FOR DEMANDING THE WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN/SOVIET MERCENARIES FROM ANGOLA; AT THE SAME TIME, IT HELPS PROTECT ZAIRE IN CASE THE MERCENARY EFFORT WITH FNLA TURNS SOUR. WE DO NOT BELIEVE MOBUTU'S PUBLIC PROHIBITION MEANS HE WILL NOT IN FACT CONTINUE FACILITATING THE PROVISION OF MERCENARIES TO BOTH
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FNLA AND UNITA SO LONG AS HE VIEWS SUCH ASSISTANCE AS IN THE COLLECTIVE INTEREST OF ZAIRE AND ITS FRIENDS IN ANGOLA.

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